



## U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

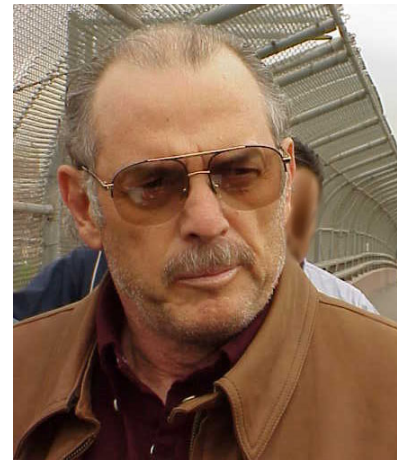
April 5, 2006

# News Release

### **A top Arizona convicted drug trafficker deported after 16 years in prison** *Figueroa-Soto was turned over to Mexican authorities on suspicion of committing three murders*

DENVER — A well-known Arizona convicted drug trafficker from Mexico, who is also wanted for three murders in Mexico, was deported today into the custody of Mexican law enforcement by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers.

Jaime Javier Figueroa-Soto, 59, who was just released March 30 following a 16-year federal prison sentence, was deported into the waiting arms of officers from the Mexican Immigration Service. Figueroa-Soto was known as Tucson's most notorious marijuana trafficker over the last two decades.



Figueroa-Soto was convicted in both federal and state courts of heading a huge marijuana smuggling and distribution network during the 1980s, and of laundering the proceeds. The federal and state sentences ran concurrently. According to prosecutors during the trial he was worth an estimated \$109 million at the time.

Figueroa-Soto last entered the United States illegally in 1988. He was later convicted of Continuing Criminal Enterprise in the U.S. District Court, District of Arizona, in June 1992. As a criminal alien, ICE immediately took him into custody.

Figueroa-Soto served the last portion of his sentence at the maximum security federal detention facility in Florence, Colo. Upon his release, he was transferred to the ICE Contract Detention Facility in Aurora, Colo., to await his deportation. During deportation processing, ICE officers learned that Figueroa-Soto was wanted for murder by Mexican authorities.

Mexican Attorney General's Office has a warrant from Magdalena, Sonora, Mexico, for Figueroa-Soto's arrest on suspicion of killing three men in 1987.

He was flown from Denver to El Paso yesterday via the Justice Prisoner Alien Transportation System (JPATS) aircraft, which is operated by the U.S. Marshals Service. He was escorted to the

middle of El Paso's Stanton Street Bridge this morning by ICE officers where he was taken into custody by officers from the Mexican Immigration Service.

"Figueroa-Soto was a significant figure in drug trafficking in Arizona," said Douglas Maurer, field office director for ICE Detention and Removal Operations in the Denver area of operations. "Now he's a 59-year-old convicted criminal who just completed 16 years in a U.S. federal prison, and he may be serving more time in a Mexican prison." Maurer heads a four-state area which includes: Colorado, Wyoming, Montana and Idaho.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*